

MEMORANDUM

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THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

ACTION 7338  
April 13, 1970

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: Henry A. Kissinger *HK*

SUBJECT: Decision on South Asian Arms Supply

I have your comments on your first consideration of the South Asian arms policy issue. Since my memo may have been unclear, I want to be sure I understand your decision before issuing instructions.

Perhaps because my memo was misleading you selected an option which would relax the present embargo on the sale of lethal equipment to allow the sale of replacement tanks, planes and other lethal equipment on a regular basis as long as it could be described as replacing previously supplied U.S. equipment lost through normal attrition.

At the same time, I understood from your other comments your desire for a package which would not only (1) constitute a "substantial gesture" for Pakistan but also (2) be as politically unprovocative as possible in the U.S. For this reason, I had suggested a one-time sale of a limited number of tanks and planes without changing the basic policy. This move would be more limited.

Given the wish you have expressed, the choice is between these two courses:

1. Retaining the general embargo on the regular sale of lethal equipment but making a one-time exception to sell Pakistan a few items they especially want. This would be a friendly gesture toward Pakistan, though it would not provide the continuing flow of equipment the Pakistanis would prefer. Spare parts for all U.S. equipment would go on being sold on a continuing basis as they are now under present policy; they are not prohibited under the present embargo. [You would have the choice of selling directly some or all of the following: six F-104 fighters

SECRET

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PAGE 2

and/or B-57 bombers to fill out existing squadrons, 100 M-47 tanks.]

Some domestic critics and the Indians would object to any move that seems to be broadening military programs, especially (as far as the Indians are concerned) in Pakistan's favor. Such a move would be defended on grounds that (a) we do not wish to re-enter the military supply business on a regular basis but (b) it makes sense as a complement to economic aid to provide a few replacement items on a one-time basis that will save Pakistan from having to buy all new equipment for whole units whose U.S. equipment is aging.

2. Relaxing the embargo to allow the continuing sale of replacements. This would permit the sale of tanks, planes and other lethal equipment on a regular basis as long as it could be described as replacing previously supplied U.S. equipment lost through normal attrition. The Pakistanis would regard this as an important move, although they would prefer to see the embargo removed altogether.

Critics in the U. S. would charge that, having successfully extricated ourselves from the India-Pakistan rivalry, the U. S. was now re-involving itself. The next step, they would say, would be replacing worn-out F-86 aircraft or older tanks with F-104 or F-5 aircraft and tanks of a later generation. The Indians would charge that the U. S. was rejuvenating its alliance with Pakistan. This move would have to be defended on grounds of keeping non-Communist sources of arms open to Pakistan and helping a moderate government meet -- per the Nixon doctrine -- its legitimate needs.

In short, the first option above is a more limited move than the second.

Approve #1 -- one-time sale                      ✓

Approve #2 -- continuing sale of replacements                     

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*Hold until we see whether the Indians will be in a mental corner.*